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ABSTRACT

This guide outlines the benefits, operational considerations, and evaluation of the student safety patrol as an integral part of school activity which not only enriches the real-life learning of pupils but also helps prevent accidents. Several types of student patrols are discussed: building and grounds patrols, pupil transportation patrols, and pedestrian patrols. The major portion of the guide covers essential operational considerations such as: group planning; the varied roles of the administration, the safety education coordinator, the classroom teacher, and the student body; suggested policies concerning the selection, instruction, and services of patrol members; insignia and equipment; parental consent; and questions on liability of which a school needs to be aware. A final section on evaluation includes a chart designed to help the school faculty and staff construct a progress profile of the student patrol program. (SES)

Improving Student Patrols:

A Guide . . .

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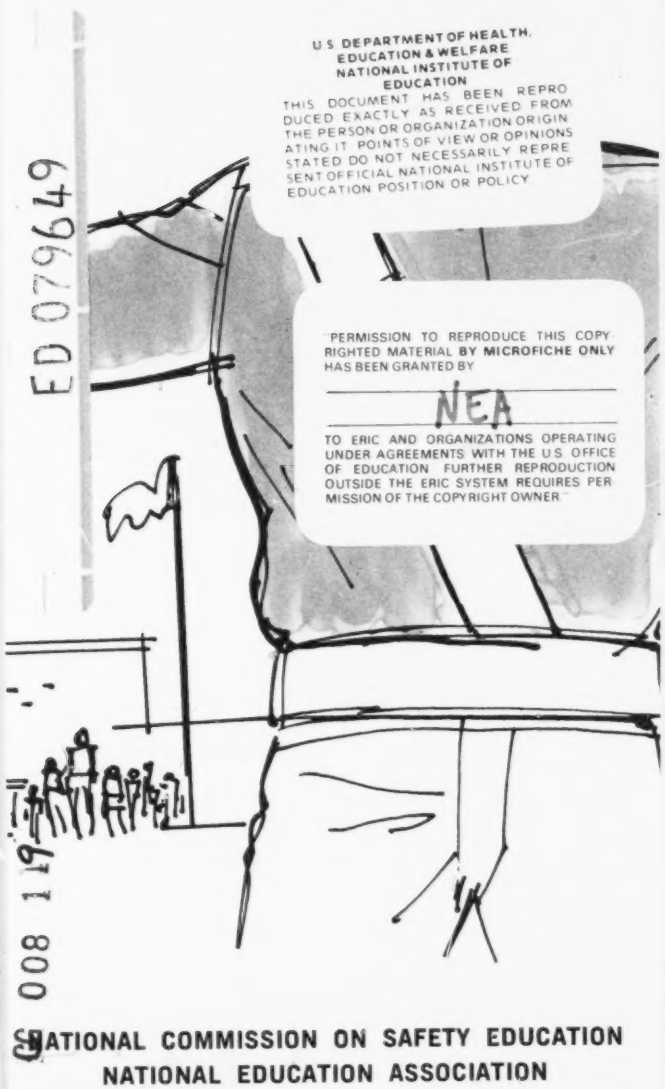

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SAFETY EDUCATION
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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INTRODUCTION

SCHOOL SYSTEMS in the United States aim to perpetuate and improve the democratic way of life through the development of better citizens. While pursuing this worthwhile goal, school people have long known that the desirable type of educational program is not limited to student achievement in the area of academic knowledge. Rather, it has been found that the school should provide students with a measure of self-direction while they participate in a variety of life situations. Thus, each student has an opportunity to assist in planning and implementing actions designed to help individuals and groups cope with societal problems. In so doing, students acquire those skills of citizenship that are likely to result in more effective living.

This guide is based on a 1953 publication of the NEA National Commission on Safety Education entitled *The Expanding Role of School Patrols.* The original version was developed by more than 40 educators and consultants who met in Jackson's Mill, West Virginia, during 1950 and in Washington, D.C., during 1952. Participants included representative teachers, school administrators, and college professors as well as specialists from several national organizations.

BENEFITS OF STUDENT PATROLS

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS are becoming increasingly aware of the unique contributions of student patrol organizations within the overall program of education. When structured and operated according to recommended practice, student patrols provide all enrollees with a continuing experience in more efficient living. Student patrols offer dynamic motivation for true achievement because they stem from existing needs, offer multiple opportunities for cooperative planning (and for implementing those plans), and provide an effective medium for developing leadership. While such patrols cannot do the entire job of school safety education, their effective operation meets a genuine need.

Serving to enrich the learning of pupils in real life situations as well as to prevent accidents, student safety patrols are an integral part of school activity.

By their very nature, student patrols provide a protective influence for the entire student body. Through regular presence of student patrolmen at designated places, through their personal example, and through the carrying out of their duties, patrol members serve continually to remind pupils of sound behavioral practices. But the protection they provide is a concomitant value rather than the sole reason for having patrols. As part of the school program, patrols can be fully justified on the basis of educational values alone.

Whenever the movement of student groups is involved in the operation of the typical school program, situations may develop that require management controls which school administrators and teachers alone cannot provide. An effective student patrol program not only helps to achieve the orderly administration of school routines and student movements but creates the means for solving difficult problems to the benefit of everyone concerned. In addition to their basic educational values, therefore, student patrols provide protection against injuries, save time in mass movements of the student body, and conserve pupil and teacher energy for other worthwhile activities.

Types of Student Patrols

Building and Grounds Patrol.—This segment of a patrol organization contributes to efficient movement of students and helps to guide their behavior on the school site. In more detail, student patrol members:

- . . . help to maintain safe and orderly movement of the student body
- . . . provide information and guidance for students and visitors
- . . . increase the probability that all students will reach points of safety in the event of natural or man-made disasters

. . . help keep recreation areas in good condition —eliminating hazards, seeing that equipment is used correctly, and restricting groups to assigned localities.

Pupil Transportation Patrol.—Activities may include the following:

. . . helping to maintain order among school bus riders
. . . assisting students while they are boarding and leaving school buses and private vehicles
. . . advising students, at bus stops, in regard to when and how to cross trafficways in a safe manner
. . . furnishing information and giving directions for the parking of vehicles on the school site.

Pedestrian Patrol.—Members of this patrol serve at intersections and at pedestrian crossings in the vicinity of the school. With a primary responsibility for instructing and protecting student pedestrians who must cross a street or highway, members of the pedestrian patrol should be assigned to positions well back from the curb. Members *should not* attempt to influence the movement of vehicles by standing in the path of vehicular traffic or by displaying any sort of warning device over the roadway.

Group Planning

IN ORDER to initiate a student patrol organization or to bring about major improvement, there must be a starting point. A meeting of the faculty and staff can be a logical beginning. Through the problem-solving approach, a group discussion would likely result in a positive attitude toward the potential usefulness of student patrols. Specifically, a thorough discussion should enable school personnel to recognize the need for different types of patrols and to become interested in helping to bring them into operation. In follow-up discussions, the faculty and staff might seek answers to questions such as:

- . . . from what groups and grade levels should patrol members be drawn?
- . . . who should select or elect patrol members?
- . . . in what ways can patrol activities and classroom safety instruction be related?
- . . . in what ways can the student patrol program be interpreted to the community?
- . . . what are the desirable relationships between the school and community agencies regarding the patrol program?
- . . . how can student participation be stimulated and used to plan and operate patrols?

Although these and other questions would likely arise, the faculty and staff should attempt only tentative answers. At this point, the student body should become involved. Teachers at every grade level should lead class discussions of problems which student patrols can help to solve. Also, the student council or related student organizations should be asked to consider ways in which patrols might be used in and around the school.

The importance of cooperative planning cannot be over-emphasized. Strong student patrol programs grow out of the combined participation of the school administration, teachers, students, parents, and representatives of official and non-official community groups interested in

school safety. It should be noted that cooperative planning should result in a program that is authorized by the school board, is directed by the school administrative staff, is supervised by a qualified safety education coordinator, and is staffed by trained members of the student body. While non-school groups can make valuable contributions to the planning process and should lend support to the continuing program, much of the educational value can be lost when school people delegate leadership or instructional responsibility to non-school agencies.

Since the basic purposes of student patrols are educational in nature, school administrators are responsible for furnishing initiative and guidance to groups interested in building a good student patrol program. Community agencies desiring to help the schools should counsel with and be guided by professional educators so that the best interests of children may be served. Ideas may come from any source, but school administrators are ultimately responsible for the way in which all parts of the school program are planned and conducted.

Effective joint action with community groups requires that agreements be worked out in advance on such matters as instructing and guiding patrol members, obtaining patrol insignia and equipment, financing the patrol program, publicizing patrol activities, providing recognition for patrol services. The school cannot surrender its legal educational duties, but it can enrich its program by drawing on services available from community organizations. Student patrols, as an integral part of the whole educational program, should be financed by the board of education.

Role of the Administration

The school administrator or principal is the key figure in the effective operation of student patrols. Bearing primary responsibility for the program, the administration should:

. . . give active direction and support to carrying out broad-based plans

. . . see that appropriate educational processes, in-

cluding classroom instruction, are brought into play in connection with patrol activity

- ... know whether patrol activities conform with existing laws and regulations
- ... be familiar with school liability as it relates to the operation of student safety patrols
- ... assure the cooperation of all students and school personnel
- ... schedule regular opportunities for the faculty and students to discuss patrols and their problems
- ... organize the safety education coordinator's schedule so as to provide sufficient time for this person to carry out assigned duties
- ... draw upon community resources to enrich the student patrol program.

The role of the administrator or principal is flexible. He can take an active part in every phase of the patrol program, or he can provide a minimum of administrative direction in the planning and operational stages by delegating authority to a safety education coordinator who is a member of the faculty.

Role of the Safety Education Coordinator

For each facet of the overall school safety education program, an obvious relationship exists between the strength of broad support and actual achievement of objectives. Therefore, the safety education coordinator should possess those traits of personality and character that lead naturally to mutual respect and rapport among students, teachers, parents, and the public at large. A safety education coordinator who motivates students to do a thorough job, invokes enthusiasm among members of the faculty, and creates a favorable image throughout the community can lead a student patrol organization to worthy educational accomplishments. In addition, in order to be an effective faculty leader of a student patrol organization, the safety education coordinator should be:

- ... aware of the specific needs for student patrol service in the vicinity of the school

- ...alert to the potential abilities of individual students
- ...cognizant of the importance of approaching group work on a democratic basis
- ...able to make proper use of available community resources.

Role of the Classroom Teacher

Classroom teachers at every grade level should see that patrol problems are discussed by student groups as a part of on-going instructional topics. For maximum achievement, each classroom teacher should strive to:

- ...maintain high morale among patrol members
- ...encourage all students to cooperate with members of the patrol
- ...identify patrol problems that need attention
- ...give proper recognition to the work of the patrols.

Role of the Student Body

Each pupil has the definite responsibility of cooperating with members of the student patrol so that they may operate effectively for the benefit of all. Students should take advantage of opportunities in the classroom and elsewhere to raise and discuss problems related to the patrol program.

Different types of student organizations may be used to good purpose in advancing the patrol program. Emphasis should be placed on motivating group-directed activity through pupil organizations. Pupil organizations that have proved effective include the following:

- ...student councils which devote time and attention to problems of safety in the school and community
- ...student clubs which are often involved in schoolwide projects designed to improve safety conditions for pupils
- ...safety committees, fitting into the pattern of student councils, which have a general purpose of surveying environmental conditions, proposing remedies for various problems, and developing action programs based on the findings.

Suggested Policies

Pupils may be selected, elected, appointed, or otherwise named to serve on student patrols. While no one plan can be considered best for all situations, it is recommended that the student body help determine the method of naming their leaders.

Pupils serving on patrols should be those who have the respect of their fellow students and who have shown a cooperative attitude toward worthwhile activities of the school. It is particularly important that they be alert, reflect a sense of security, have good judgment, and be reliable.

A student should serve on only one type of patrol at a time. As a rule he should have an opportunity to choose the particular patrol which appeals to him. Assignments to patrol duty should be made in terms of the scope of the job to be done—i.e., pupil's own classroom, one wing of the building, the whole building, a street corner, one part of the playground—and also in terms of the pupil's age and abilities. Patrol membership should be voluntary.

The success of the student patrol program depends on how well each member learns to carry out his duties. His instruction should enable him to:

- . . practice safe ways of doing things, and courteously help others to do likewise
- . . . report for duty regularly and promptly
- . . . patrol his post efficiently and according to instructions
- . . . keep his equipment clean and in good condition
- . . . be alert to suggest improvements in the school program.

The scope and limitations of the duties, responsibilities, and privileges of patrol members should be clearly defined and widely understood by everyone in the school and community. It is most important that the patrol members themselves understand thoroughly their own role as leaders in the school-community. This leadership

role may be best fulfilled by the student who:

. . . knows and attends to the duties of his post
. . . maintains an attitude of cheerfulness while on duty
. . . genuinely tries to help others
. . . shows a willingness to serve as a member of the patrol team
. . . displays confidence and self-reliance in carrying out his duties
. . . adheres to safe practices, whether on or off duty
. . . shows genuine respect for his fellow pupils and for school personnel.

The relationship of each patrol member to other students is extremely important. In no case should a patrol member assume that he is a 'policeman' with the power to 'arrest' other students. Rather, he should view his role as that of one who assists others constructively and helpfully in situations which might otherwise be dangerous. The student patrol plan should provide an easy and effective way for patrol members to report to the safety education coordinator instances of unsafe behavior on the part of students. Each report should be followed up with appropriate action to discourage improper and unsafe behavior.

Regardless of the type of patrol on which a boy or girl serves, no patrol member should be placed in a position where he would be unduly jeopardized as a result of exercising normal patrol duties. In serving on the building and grounds patrol, during exit-drills for example, a student patrolman might be the last student to leave his own classroom. As a patrol member, however, he should not be the last one to leave the school building. All exit-drills should be followed with a check-up by the principal or other designated adult to make sure that the building is clear of pupils.

In every case where the member of any type of student patrol sees a child injured or in need of help in or near the school, the patrol member's duty is to report the facts to the princi-

pal, the safety education coordinator, or another responsible member of the school staff. The student patrol member should not take it upon himself to render first aid, to move the injured pupil, or to take him to the school nurse or dispensary. After reporting to the proper person the facts of an injury, the patrolman may assist, but only under the immediate supervision of an adult.

Since patrol service is an educational experience, as many pupils as possible should have the opportunity to serve. This means that careful thought needs to be given to the length of service of patrol members. Operating efficiency should also be considered in determining how long a pupil should serve, since too-frequent changes of members may prevent them from gaining the desired proficiency.

In elementary schools, upper-grade pupils are likely to be more efficient as membe s of the patrol. To provide continuous service of good quality, provision should be made for new members to join patrols before experienced members have completed their terms.

In high schools, it is important that patrolmen have prestige and status among the entire student body as a beneficial, schoolwide activity. If patrolmen have the necessary status, students in any or all high-school grades can serve effectively. If it is difficult to achieve and maintain the necessary status for patrols, probably juniors and seniors can render the best service. Student patrols in high schools should also be organized so that the terms of experienced members overlap those of new members.

If it is desirable to have officers for patrols, the patrol members themselves may participate in electing or selecting their own leaders. Obviously, the method of naming officers should be worked out with proper guidance by the safety education coordinator and other school personnel, and should take into account the qualifications desired in patrol leaders. It is usually sufficient to have a captain and a lieutenant, among whose normal duties would be those of assisting

the safety education coordinator in coordinating patrol activities, observing the patrols in action, and assigning substitute patrolmen when necessary.

All of these matters—selection of patrol members, length of service, overlapping of terms of new and experienced patrolmen, number of patrol officers, and duties of substitutes—should be determined cooperatively by the school personnel, the pupils, and the parents.

Insignia and Equipment

Suitable equipment for patrolmen serves several important purposes. Insignia assure easy identification of patrol members by all pupils, school personnel, motorists, visitors to the school, and other persons. Insignia and equipment build morale among patrol members, and also help patrolmen to maintain their status as service groups in the school-community. The types of insignia that appeal to elementary school children may not appeal to high school youth. The wise procedure is to have the students, particularly in high schools, select their own insignia.

Care should be taken to see that the wearing of insignia does not over-emphasize the feeling of status among individual patrolmen. Student patrols are service groups, and their insignia are no reason for special privilege or for undue authoritarian behavior.

Typical insignia for patrolmen include buttons or badges, arm bands, and 'Sam Browne' belts. Equipment items help patrolmen carry out their duties and protect their health in inclement weather. Useful equipment includes foul weather gear such as raincoats, hoods, and boots. It is desirable that the insignia and equipment used by patrolmen be uniform throughout a given area.

The purchase of patrol insignia and equipment should be considered a legitimate expenditure of school funds. When parent-teacher associations or other community groups supply insignia and/or equipment, care should be taken to see that identification of the source

is modest. Equipment should identify the patrol member *only* with the school or the board of education.

Parental Consent

Pupils should not be assigned to patrol duty without the written consent of a parent or guardian. The form shown here is suggested for use in obtaining the parental consent. The reverse side carries a message from the principal to parents explaining important facts about the student patrol program.

Parent's Approval for Student Patrol Duty

(date)

I accept the statement of the purposes and values of student patrols as set forth on the reverse side of this card.

I hereby consent to have .....
(name of boy or girl)

.....serve as a member of the

.....patrol,
(building and grounds, transportation, or pedestrian)
with the understanding that (he) (she) will be under school supervision during all periods of patrol duty.

Signed:.....
(parent or guardian)

Your child has expressed a desire to serve on one of our student patrols. He understands that patrol members assume definite responsibilities, and that serving on a patrol means sacrificing a few minutes each day in order to fulfill his duties as a patrol member.

(He) (She) will receive instruction in (his) (her) duties. (His) (Her) well-being will not be jeopardized through service as a patrol member.

We operate our student patrol program because it offers natural opportunities for individual initiative and for group-directed activity, and because it provides guidance for the safe conduct of all students. We believe that your child will benefit from experience on the patrol.

Please let us know at any time how we can improve the educational values of our student patrol program.

Signed:.....
(principal)

Liability Questions

In a few states, specific statutes authorize student patrols in the schools. These laws usually include some statement concerning the liability or non-liability of the school district in case of injury to a patrol member or to other pupils through the patrol activity. In some of these laws permission of parents is required. Pedestrian patrol members must be stationed at the curb and not in the roadway, and patrols are to direct children only and not vehicular traffic. In the absence of such state laws, it is recommended that local action be taken to assure adherence to these sound principles.

Some laws are more detailed and specific than others. While some states do not expressly authorize student patrols, the school board's general powers are usually broad enough to permit the operation of the program and the enactment of appropriate local regulations concerning the activity.

Every school administrator should know the provisions of the laws and regulations in his own state concerning liability and insurance as related to student patrols. Among the questions that will help to clarify pertinent issues are the following:

1. Are pupils who serve as patrol members placed in potentially more hazardous positions than other students?
2. Would the school district be liable for damages if a student patrol member is injured?
3. In the few states where legislation has done away with the common law immunity of school districts, does this legislation include injuries sustained by reason of student patrol activities?
4. Can the school board buy insurance to cover pupil injuries sustained through patrol activities?
5. Is the classroom teacher or principal in charge of patrols liable for negligence if inadequate instructions and warn-

ings are given to students who undertake these activities?

6. Does permission of parents relieve the school personnel of liability if the pupil is injured in a sanctioned activity?
7. To what extent, if any, are school personnel relieved of liability in cases where the patrol activity is, in effect, directed by a non-school agency in the community?
8. Can a patrol member who is injured while at his post of duty be charged with contributory negligence? Does the answer depend wholly on whether or not he was following instructions?
9. If an injury is caused partly by the patrol member's own negligence, does this fact relieve the insurer from paying a claim on the injury?
10. How can student patrol activities best be conducted to avoid injuries to the patrol members and at the same time allow patrols to serve as a protective influence for other pupils?

EVALUATION

THE FOLLOWING device is designed to help you construct a profile of the achievement of your student patrol program. It deals with general characteristics of an effective program, and suggests points of fundamental concern to those responsible for planning and guiding this phase of the total school offering. Detailed references to specific types of student safety patrols are purposely omitted.

Use this device to ascertain the status of the patrol program in your school. Use it again a year from now to see the progress made.

Read each item, and place a check mark at the right to indicate what you believe is the present achievement level. After checking all items, connect the check marks with a continuous line to reveal the achievement profile.

A year from now when you use this device again, the continuous line connecting the check marks will show the progress your student patrol program has made in terms of the basic principles given. Of course, as progress is made toward an ideal goal, the profile line moves to the right.

Making Progress Toward An Ideal Goal

	Levels of achievement			
	0	1	2	3
1 The student body participates cooperatively with the student patrols in formulating the rules and regulations under which the patrols operate.				
2 The safety rules and regulations of the school are based on periodic surveys of possible hazards in the school building, on the school grounds, and in the community.				
3 There is a conscious and continuous effort by all members of the school staff to foster safe practices on the part of the pupils in all curriculum areas and in all school activities.				
	0	1	2	3

Making Progress Toward An Ideal Goal

Levels of achievement

0	1	2	3

4

The student body accepts the patrols as necessary and vital parts of the school organization.

5

Teachers and pupils are given frequent opportunities to express their opinions regarding patrol operation, through such means as questionnaires, suggestion boxes, and open discussions.

6

Time needed to do effective work with patrols is made available to the safety education coordinator by the principal within the day's work program.

7

The safety education coordinator has had adequate preparation in the basic principles of safety education, and has a thorough knowledge of the school plant and grounds.

8

Definite qualifications have been established for the selection of patrol members.

9

Both boys and girls are eligible to serve on patrols.

10

The written permission of parents is obtained before a student can become a patrol member.

11

Appropriate insignia and equipment are provided at school expense so that the patrols can function effectively at all times.

12

If insignia or equipment is provided by non-school agencies, it is free from advertising and entails no undesirable obligations for the school.

13

Patrol membership rotates among many pupils in order that the advantage of first-hand experience in patrol work is spread as widely as possible.

0	1	2	3

Making Progress Toward An Ideal Goal

Levels of achievement

	0	1	2	3
14 There are regularly scheduled and carefully planned meetings of the patrols at which members discuss matters of interest and concern.				
15 The school has organized all of the types of patrols that are necessary to meet the safety needs of the school.				
16 There are definite provisions for instructing patrol members in such matters as: Qualities of a good patrol member General duties of a patrol member What to do in case of accident Securing desirable student attitudes toward the patrols through appropriate conduct of its members Use and care of insignia and equipment.				
17 Appropriate recognition is provided from time to time for all patrol members to help maintain their interest and morale.				
18 School accident reports are kept and carefully analyzed to help determine ways of improving the patrol program.				
19 Public information media are used in order to keep the community fully informed of the activities and achievements of the student patrols.				
20 The school initiates periodic appraisals of the long-term effectiveness of student patrols, or cooperates with community agencies in appraising the patrols.				
	0	1	2	3